



IAW / AIF
Projet « Eau et serviettes pour les écolières »
Water and Pads P Project



ONG LA COLOMBE

LA COLOMBE

Report about the events at the Le Guide School Complex at Vogan Togo in October and November 2021

Introduction

In the framework of the implementation of the project "Water and Pads for Schoolgirls", the NGO LA COLOMBE received funding from IAW to carry out the activity at the Le Guide School Complex located in Vogan in the Prefecture of Vo, maritime region of Togo.

This report will focus on the following points: preparation of the activities, awareness sessions, difficulties and results obtained.

1- Preparation of activities

The Complexe Scolaire le Guide school was chosen following a written request from its director, Mr DEGBE Ablam, to sensitise pupils on sexual health and menstrual hygiene. Discussions were held with the headmaster on the organisation of the activities. Because of the Covid19 pandemic, not all pupils were grouped together. There were first the girls and boys in two groups and the girls alone for one session.

2- Awareness sessions

Mrs AKAKPO Adjoa Thérèse, Mrs ADAH Julienne, Mrs AZAKPO Dédé midwife and Mr TOSSA Anani took part in the educational and awareness-raising sessions.

2.1- Tools used

Posters on Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), charts on puberty, documents transmitted by the IAW on "Puberty and menstrual hygiene" and "Becoming a Woman" were the main tools used.

2.2- Conduct of the awareness-raising sessions

The awareness sessions took place on 20 and 28 October and 4 November 2021.

2.2.1-Awareness-raising on sexual health and hygiene

The first sessions brought together girls and boys. The interactive approach was used. A presentation on men and women, the differences between them, sexual health, how to take care of one's body, common sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS was given. Signs of sexually transmitted diseases were also mentioned. The above mentioned tools were used. The images of sexual diseases raised the awareness of the students about the real existence of these infections. Many questions were asked, such as

- How to avoid contracting these diseases?
- Is there an age limit for contracting the disease?
- What should be done when one has these signs?
- Do herbs and decoctions treat these diseases?
- If I have slept with several girls and I notice this, what should I do?

2.2.2- Sensitisation on menstrual hygiene management (MHM)

This third awareness-raising session brought together only girls to discuss the issues of menstruation and hygiene before, during and after menstruation.

The introduction of the topic was to talk about puberty, the changes that take place in the body. This led the girls to understand why menstruation occurs.

The documents "Becoming a woman" and "Puberty and menstrual hygiene, a guide for girls" were used. The few signs before the period were mentioned. Girls should pay attention and listen to their bodies.

A MHM kit was recommended. This kit (pouch containing, sanitary napkin, soap, pants) should be in their bags wherever they go so that there are no unpleasant surprises. Reusable cotton sanitary towels were recommended.

The students were very interested. They were felt at ease asking questions and sharing their first experience with others.

All the girls admitted that their mothers had never talked to them about it. And discussing sex in most families is taboo.

Questions included:

- At what age can you have your first period?
- Is menstruation an illness?
- Can you have a late period without getting pregnant?
- Should we discuss sexuality with our parents?

3. Results

142 students increased their knowledge of sexual health and sexually transmitted diseases.

79 girls aged between 11 and 22 years were strengthened in menstrual hygiene management.

142 students became aware of sexually transmitted infections.

4 girls contacted the midwife for advice.

Some testimonials:

*From now on I will not be ashamed of myself. I have always considered menstruation as something abnormal, disgusting and I have always hidden it. **ADO Charlotte 6th grade***

Now I know how to take care of myself in terms of clothing and the little worries of abdominal pain.

Houssi Afi Year 4th grade

From now on, there are no more girls dropping out during the month. And they are more alert in class.

The headmaster.

3. Difficulties

The post office was slow to transmit the documents on receipt. This caused a delay in implementation.

Another cause of delay was that we had to wait for the lifting of the ban on activities in schools. There were unforeseen costs at the post office and at customs.

Conclusion

The Water and Pads project was implemented as soon as the documents were received by the post office.

The project was very beneficial for the students, especially the girls. It has reinforced the visibility of IAW and LA COLOMBE, strengthened our partnership with the hospital in the town of Vogan through the midwife, as well as the partnership with the school.

The headmaster would like these sessions to be repeated every year. Our thanks go to IAW for its concern to improve the health and education of girls in poor countries! Thanks also to the donors!

Report by **Thérèse AKAKPO Adjoa**, Coordinator LA COLOMBE. Lomé Togo

Email : macolombe98@yahoo.fr Tel. + 228 22 25 35 84 / +228 90 01 41 21